



Request for City Council Committee Action from the Department of Public Works

Date: June 18, 2013

To: Honorable Sandra Colvin Roy, Chair Transportation & Public Works Committee
Referral: Honorable Betsy Hodges, Chair Ways & Means/Budget Committee

Subject: **Nicollet Mall Redesign and Reconstruction: Issuance of Design Competition Brief and RFP**

Recommendation:

- A. Approve the four finalists recommended by the Implementation Committee for the Design Competition phase of the redesign and reconstruction of Nicollet Mall and approve issuance of the Design Competition Brief and RFP.
- B. Authorize the appropriate city officials to execute stipend agreements with the four firms for \$30,000 each. No additional appropriation is required.

Previous Directives:

- April 16, 2013 – Receive and file update on Nicollet Mall Redesign and issuance of RFQ.
- December 12, 2012 - 2012R-655, Adopting the 2013-2017 Five Year Capital Program, including \$555,000 for Nicollet Mall Planning (PV084).

Department Information

Prepared by: Ben Hecker, Interagency Coordinator, Public Works

Approved by: Steve Kotke, Director, Public Works _____

Presenters in Committee: David Frank, Director of Transit Development, CPED

Peter Brown, Project Consultant

Reviews

- Permanent Review Committee (PRC): Approval __ Date __ Concurrent _____
- Civil Rights Approval Approval __ Date __ Concurrent _____
- Policy Review Group (PRG): Approval __NA__ Date _____

Financial Impact

- No financial impact
- Action is within the Business Plan

Supporting Information

The City of Minneapolis has selected four urban design teams to compete as finalists in the Nicollet Mall Design Competition. The competition will provide the City with multiple visions for Nicollet Mall and will give the city the opportunity to see how different urban design teams approach the challenge of redesigning the mall. In September, the City may hire one of the four teams to complete concept design work. That team will consolidate the best ideas from its own submission and, if appropriate, the other three submissions into a single vision for Nicollet Mall.

Some or all of the design proposals submitted in the competition may be used as to engage the public in a robust conversation about what Nicollet Mall means to the people of Minneapolis and how we can make the most of the vibrant mall space in an urban, modern and dynamic way. Those conversations will also be essential in developing a design for a new Nicollet Mall that will truly be a source of pride for the city and state.

History

Nicollet Mall was first created as a transit mall in 1965. It was reconstructed in 1991 with the granite paving system that remains in place today. While the design of the mall has essentially remained the same since its conception, competitor regions have invested in new, innovative public spaces to recruit top talent and business. The 1991 reconstruction included a paving system for the sidewalks comprised of multi-colored granite that has not withstood Minnesota's climate. The granite pavers heave, crack, break, are difficult to repair or replace, and are tripping hazards. This deterioration has caused repair costs to escalate and reduced the overall aesthetics of the mall. .

Nicollet Mall was innovative when it first became a transit mall decades ago. Now is the time to be innovative again. The mall is more than a street – it is the outside world's window into Minnesota and the place where investors get their first impression of Minnesota's potential for growth.

Project Overview

The City of Minneapolis, in partnership with the Minneapolis Downtown Council, is spearheading an effort to redesign and reconstruct Nicollet Mall. The goal of the collaboration is to develop a new vision and concept design for the mall to ensure it remains the leading center for business in the metro area and Minnesota and helps spur growth for decades. Once complete, the project will cement Nicollet Mall's position as the region's premiere business, transit, and entertainment connection - a linear spine through downtown connecting green spaces, shops, office towers and catalyzing new investment and development.

The reconstructed Nicollet Mall will combine high-quality urban design with appropriate materials and systems to create a public space that is beautiful, durable and able to withstand Minnesota's climate. The new mall will attract many more workers, residents, and guests to the heart of downtown Minneapolis to work, shop, attend arts and sporting events, and take part in the many recreational opportunities available. Plus, an enhanced connection to the Mississippi riverfront will highlight our State's most famous natural amenity.

Scope, Schedule, and Budget

The reconstruction of Nicollet Mall is expected to cost approximately \$30 million to \$40 million, and will be funded with a combination of Minnesota State bond proceeds and assessments of surrounding property owners. The project's budget will include the complete reconstruction of the street and sidewalks from building face to building face, for the twelve blocks between Washington Avenue and Grant Street. Construction is expected to be complete by 2015-2016. Detailed design work through construction documents will be a

collaborative effort between the winning urban design team, Minneapolis Public Works engineering staff, and an appropriate engineering and planning firm, if different from the urban design team.

Nicollet Mall Implementation Committee

A nine-member Nicollet Mall Implementation Committee will guide the project from now through selection of the design team. The committee comprises four members selected by the Minneapolis Downtown Council and five members selected by the City:

Steven Bosacker (Chair)
Council Member Goodman
Council Member Lilligren
Neil Reardon
Mayor Rybak
David Marquis
Bob Pfefferle
David Wilson
David Wright

Design Competition

The Nicollet Mall Implementation Committee determined that a design competition would be the best way to identify an urban design consultant and to collect a range of ideas from four design teams that may be distilled into a single vision for Nicollet Mall. The City's and Minneapolis Downtown Council's purpose in administering this competition is to obtain alternative visions for a future Nicollet Mall and to inform the consultant selection process so that the City retains the best qualified design team for the project.

The competition will culminate in the fall 2013 selection of a design team that will be retained to create and execute a detailed design for the Nicollet Mall reconstruction project. The competition is not being conducted to find a final design for the project. It's being conducted to find a final designer that will be able to achieve the following:

- Elevate Nicollet Mall – regionally, nationally and internationally – and attract acclaim for great urban design.
- Transform Nicollet Mall into an even more pedestrian-friendly destination.
- Strengthen Nicollet Mall's connections to the river, the lakes and all of Minneapolis.
- Attract investment, businesses, and residents and revitalize all of downtown.
- Reinforce Minneapolis' high standards for design, arts, and culture.
- Reflect Minneapolis' shared values and appreciation of nature, water, ecology, and the environment.

The winning team will consolidate the best ideas from its own and the other submissions, if appropriate, into a single vision for Nicollet Mall. The development of this vision will be used to promote the Nicollet Mall reconstruction project generally, to obtain consensus on assessments from the business community and property owners, and to obtain consensus from the community through a public participation process during the concept design phase. The design competition will require the four teams to show their creativity and skill at two different levels: vision and detailed design.

The City and the Minneapolis Downtown Council will be using a three-stage, qualifications-based selection process that will include the Request for Qualifications, a Design

Competition, and a Final Presentation and Interview stage after which the winning team will be selected.

- **Stage I: Request for Qualifications:** The purpose of the Request for Qualifications process is to finalize a short list of four qualified design teams that will be invited to participate in the design competition.
- **Stage II: Design Competition:** The City will issue the Design Competition Brief to the four qualified teams. Each team will have 8 weeks to complete and submit their visions and designs for Nicollet Mall.
- **Stage III: Presentations and Interviews:** The four teams will be asked to visit Minneapolis in September to present their submissions publicly, and to interview with the staff team and a review panel, which will include the Implementation Committee and members of the design community. The winning team will be selected based upon public feedback, the outcome of the interview process, and a final recommendation from the Implementation Committee to Minneapolis City Council.

Design Competition Finalists

The City issued the Request for Qualifications on April 29. Qualifications, due May 31, were reviewed by staff and the Implementation Committee. The city received 20 responsive submissions that were evaluated based upon the selection criteria provided in the Requests for Qualifications based around these categories:

- Experienced urban designers
- Climate appropriate
- Vision and detail
- Design for durability
- Transit experience
- Scope, schedule, budget
- Public process
- Green and sustainable
- Accessibility and safety
- Market Moving design

Based on this review, the Implementation Committee selected the following four teams: Daoust Lestage, James Corner Field Operations, Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, and Tom Leader Studio.

Design Competition Brief and RFP

The Design Competition will begin with entrance into stipend agreements with and issuance of a Design Competition Brief and Request for Proposals to each of the four finalists. Each team will be asked to submit three documents in response to the Request for Proposals: Design Submission, Proposal for Full Design Services, and Fee Proposal. The Design Brief includes Design Principles to provide guidance to the design teams on the City's objectives for the redesign and reconstruction of Nicollet Mall.

Next Steps

Public Works plans to issue the Request for Proposals/Design Brief July 2, with responses due August 27. In September, teams will be invited to Minneapolis for a one-day visit to meet with City staff, interview with the Review Panel (which will include members of the Implementation Committee and several representatives of the design community), and present their design ideas publicly. The Review Panel will select and recommend the winning firm to the City Council for final approval in October.